

The Level of University Students' Involvements Based on Co-Curriculum Principles and Academic Achievements

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Abstract

Research and Development (R&D) in the co-curriculum field in education among higher educational institutions are dominant to further enhance the quality of the education to ensure the co-curricular element that is instilled can give a higher impact on the students. This study comprises of 213 respondents sampled among students of the Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). The result shows the student's involvement based on the eight co-curricular principles had shown that all co-curricular principles achieved average with the min value of min=3.20. The result of the analysis showed that students' involvement in community service is the highest with the min value of min=3.624. Whereas the lowest students' involvement in co-curricular activities was public speaking with min=2.735. The findings showed that overall, the min value from one semester to another had shown an increment of 2.0% (min=0.08) from 3.03 to 3.11. There was no significant correlation test between the level of involvement in co-curricular activities and the students' level of academic achievement received the value of $p=0.480$ which showed $p > 0.05$. This study manages to obtain information regarding the level of students' involvement in co-curricular activities based on the eight IPT co-curriculum principal and their relation to the academic achievement of students.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Co-Curricular, University Students, Malaysia

Introduction

Based on the Razak report tabled in 1956, educational activity was divided into two main cores, which are the curriculum and the co-curriculum. The curriculum and the co-curriculum were the two main components in a balanced human capital development in terms of physical (J), emotional (E), spiritual (R), intellectual (I), and social (S) dimensions. Both elements work

in sync to mould and prepare competent students. The application of co-curriculum at IPT was taken seriously by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). Other than that, through the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 also wants the graduates to be balanced in terms of the JERIS dimensions. This is because academic excellence alone will not guarantee the graduates to secure a place at work (Norman, Jenil & Yahya, 2017). Co-curricular activities are also the best way in developing human capital that is active, creative, competitive, and have a strong identity parallel with the National Education Philosophy (NEP). The co-curriculum has the role and influence that are the same, whether it is directly or indirectly in the development of an individual (Othman & Jasni, 2016).

Co-curriculum also plays a vital role in all teaching and learning activities, becoming the complement of the co-curriculum result itself. Co-curricular activities not only focus on sports and games solely. There are many activities that involve co-curriculum like community service, practical, club involvement, organization building, and involved in sports or attending a program or competition (Musa & Othman, 2014). Other than that, co-curricular activities are also outside activities or educational work movement that prepares learning experience for the students. Co-curricular activities are an extension of the learning and teaching process in the classroom.

Besides that, co-curricular activities are students' involvement that brings results towards self-improvement and activities that can expose them directly or indirectly with soft skills. MOHE had introduced seven soft skills elements which are sports, culture, endeavor and innovation, public speaking, volunteerism, community service, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Co-curricular activities have become a compulsory activity for all students in higher education institutes or universities (Haron & Idris, 2010). The co-curricular implementation is compulsory so that it can be synced with the curriculum excellence that is reasoned to produce a young generation that is balanced and holistic in term of JERIS and to influence the change of the students' personality and emotion (Fadzil & Ahmad, 2010; Hasan, Kadir & Asimiran, 2013). Achievement in co-curriculum cannot be taken lightly because the co-curriculum is now a benchmark in the national education system (Husain et al., 2015).

Research Background

In pursuing the best academic result to compete with other graduates, students need to shift their focus in the co-curricular field. This is due to the MOHE had oblige all students to join co-curricular activities as a mandatory to graduate by making the co-curricular subject as marks in the overall grading. The students' involvement in co-curricular activities has forced them to divide their focus into two different fields. Meanwhile, there has been a gap between students' interest in academic and co-curriculum and personality. Students found out that between excellence in academic and personality, students chose academic excellence more (Azim et al., 2013).

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to study the level of students' involvement in co-curricular activities based on the eight IPT co-curriculum principal and its relation to the academic achievement at Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). In particular, the research is conducted specifically to examine

- a. the level of a student's involvement in co-curricular activities based on the eight university's co-curriculum principles at Faculty of Education, UKM

- b. the relationship between the levels of students' involvement in co-curricular activities with academic achievement at Faculty of Education, UKM
- c. the influence from the involvement of co-curricular activities towards the academic achievement among students of Faculty of Education, UKM

Methodology

This study uses a cross-sectional survey design. A pilot test has been done to obtain the reliability of the research tool before the real research was conducted. The items' reliability of this research instrument is considerably high, with the Cronbach Alpha's value of 0.885. Moreover, in order to determine the respondent numbers, the determination of the sample size table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), in which a total of 213 respondents were randomly sampled from the students' population from the Faculty of Education, UKM.

Results and Discussion

The value of mean is the average value for all the respondents' answers that showed towards agree and disagree in every item that is related to the category or the sub-category. Through the eight principals, the researcher explained the main analysis because the min value is the base for all analysis and description of the research findings. Overall, the student's involvement based on the eight co-curricular principles had shown that all co-curricular principal achieved average with the mean value = 3.20. The result of the analysis showed that students' involvement in community service is the highest with the mean value = 3.624. Whereas the lowest students' involvement in co-curricular activities was public speaking with mean = 2.735. Table 1 shows the descriptive analysis of the level of students' involvement in the eight-co-curriculum principles.

Table 1

Summary of the level of students' involvement in co-curricular activities based on the eight IPT co-curriculum principles at Faculty of Education, UKM

Co-Curriculum Principle	Mean	Interpretation
Sports	3.08	Average
Culture	3.50	Average
Endeavour and Innovation	3.12	Average
Public Speaking	2.74	Average
Volunteerism	3.31	Average
Community Service	3.77	High
Entrepreneurship	3.12	Average
Leadership	2.94	Average

The findings showed that overall, the min value from one semester to another had shown an increment of 2 percent (mean = 0.08) from 3.03 to 3.11. The data showed the academic achievement for each student based on the activeness in co-curricular involvement stays stagnant. The students' cumulative grade point average (CGPA) was above 64 percent for each group. Whereas, less than 64 percent showed any increment or decrement. This shows that students' involvement in co-curricular activities do not show any significant change based on the students' CGPA.

Furthermore, based on Table 2, the findings from the correlation test between the level

of involvement in co-curricular activities and the students' level of academic achievement received the value of $p = 0.480$ which showed $p > 0.05$. There is no relation between the level of involvement in co-curricular activities and the academic achievement among students of Faculty of Education, UKM. The correlation value was $r = 0.049$ which means that it is very weak. This value shows that the level of students' involvement in co-curricular activities has a frail relation, or no relation at all with the students' academic achievement.

Table 2

The coefficient correlation between the level of involvement in co-curricular activities and the level of students' academic achievement

Relation between the variables	r	p
The relationship between the level of involvement in co-curricular activities and the level of students' academic achievement	0.049	0.480

Based on the result, community service showed the highest involvement of all for the students, whereas public speaking showed otherwise. Although previous research that was conducted by Badusah (2009) showed that community service is the lowest principle being offered by the university, however, the current situation has greatly changed nowadays, whereby many programs conducted by students' council are community service based. This is because co-curricular activities of community service principle are a principle that involves an individual with activities that needed to be done voluntarily without hoping for anything in return. Apart from that, activities that involve students with this principle are frequently conducted at faculty, college, and university; thus, students can join the program easily because the program does not take a long period of time and does not need high commitment. Hence, it is not doubted that the students from the Faculty of Education, UKM are also involved in this community service-based activity.

The findings of this research support the research done by Jumat et al (2014) that studied the student's involvement in social activities during free time. This study compares between two countries which are Malaysia and China, which found that Malaysian students have a higher involvement percentage with 71.5 percent compared to Chinese students' 66 percent. Therefore, it is without a doubt that the students from the Faculty of Education, UKM also got the same result because generally university students in Malaysia are more exposed and interested to be involved in activities that are community service based. Besides, the factor that drives towards students' involvement in community service programs is that this program gives them more benefits to enhance their soft skills like teamwork, and students from all races can unite and help each other out doing chores together.

The result also shows an academic achievement for every student based on their level of activeness in co-curricular activities. Most of their CGPA value stays stagnant from semester 1 to semester 2 had exceeded 64 percent for every group. On the other hand, it is not more than 46 percent showed neither increment nor decrease in CGPA for the learning session. This shows that students' involvement in co-curricular activities does not bring any huge impact towards the students' academic achievement. The findings from this research have supported past research done by Lueptow and Kayser (1974) that investigates athletic and academic achievement. The findings from the research found that there are no

differences between athletes and non-athletes based on academic achievement. They also claim that there is no relation between academic achievements with students' involvement in co-curricular activities.

Conclusion

All in all, this study has given an impact on the MOHE to update its university's co-curriculum framework to ensure all universities enrich the co-curricular activities at the university level. Next, the findings also enlighten the university's side to re-study the practice and exercises that are instilled in the elective courses that can improve students' extra skills. University needs to cultivate students to mold and join programs that can impact their academic achievements. Abdul Rahman (2004) through his findings said that students have good achievements in academics, although they are involved actively in co-curricular activities.

Consequently, this study manages to obtain information regarding the level of a student's involvement in co-curricular activities based on the eight university's co-curriculum principal and its relation to the academic achievement of students from the Faculty of Education, UKM. This study found that the involvement of students in co-curricular activities is at an average level. Apart from that, the highest co-curricular principal involvement is the community service whereas public speaking is the lowest. The findings from this study also show that there are no correlation between students' involvement in co-curricular activities and their academic achievement.

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